

September 1976



IDEOPHILE'S NEWSLETTER



Jim Lowe
2014 S. Magnolia Drive
Tallahassee, Florida
32301

This is being sent to each of you who responded to my ad in The Buyer's Guide about Sony Betamax Videocassette recording. The response has not been overwhelming, but it appears that there are enough of us to make a joint venture worthwhile. I will be having a quarter page ad in issue #2 of Film Collectors World and will perhaps make some more contacts. If enough of you are interested I intend to send out letters such as this one on a regular basis for FREE (as long as I can afford it) if you will only send me a stamped self addressed envelope. The following two pages contain more of a general nature about this potentially incredible new hobby, but I am devoting the rest of this page to personal replies to those of you who have written:

COLLECTOR'S REPRINT EDITION

THIS FIRST MAILING IS BEING SENT TO OF YOU.

Second mailing _____

First off: Who am I? Well, I'm a 36 year old staff director for one of the legislative staffs of the Florida House of Representatives. I have a large collection of comic books (EC's, Carl Barks, etc.), but I'm relatively inactive in that now. I also have a budding collection of original comic and fantasy art, which along with television accounts for my primary collecting interest of the moment. I have my Sony Betamax plugged into a Muntz 50" screen projection-type TV, the heart of which is a Sony Trinitron. The projection system has some drawbacks (the optimum field of view is somewhat limited, and is best watched at night or in a darkened room) but for the most part the big screen is so much more enjoyable as to make these minor inconveniences acceptable. You may have seen this unit or similar ones. At \$1595 it is relatively inexpensive (compared to the Advent Videobeam for instance) and you could probably get a discount, as I did.

What I would most like to do is trade tapes with those of you who are willing to keep an eye out for my wants, while I will, of course, do the same for you. At present I have neither the time nor the inclination to be a taping service (eg. tape every episode of certain shows every day for someone). As much as possible I would like to keep things on a strict hobby-type nonprofit basis. I have no desire to gouge you for the opportunity to see shows that are of interest to you if it is within my ability to bring them to you. What seems the best idea to me right now (pending your feedback) is to trade wantlists and if you want to, trade TV Guides. They usually hit the stands here on Monday or Tuesday preceding the Saturday of the first listing. This would allow just about enough time to send one to each other in the mail, examine and mark them, and send them back before the listed shows are actually shown. Having enough tape on hand would of course be a factor which would have to be worked out. But I feel sure that I could tape a show or two for you each week or so in return for a similar effort on your part.

It seems to me that there would be at least two types of shows: Those you want to keep and those you just want to see once. Those in the latter category could be sent around on a circulating basis, possibly to a number of people before coming back to the original owner.

Any of you having access to Home Box Office, Warner Star Cable or some other pay cable system: Please let me know. You are certainly blessed with a rare chance to get some really nice stuff in uninterrupted form.

I'm sure it will be just a matter of time until prerecorded and bootleg tapes will be available. Let me know of any you know of and will pass it along. Also if you have access to a service which will turn 16mm film into tape cassettes without being concerned about the copyright.

I get my tapes from: Henry's Video 516-520 W. 8th St. Downtown Los Angeles 90014 at a cost of \$13.50 a piece (K-60) when bought by the dozen.

Your suggestions for the future of my efforts and of this type newsletter will be greatly appreciated. If you would like for me to furnish your names to each other herein I would be happy to do so. On the other hand please understand that I will respect your confidence as well.

Some shows currently being run on my channels: Star Trek, 1999, Adams Family, Munsters, FBI, Lone Ranger, Night Gallery, Dark Shadows, Mary Hartman, Gomer Pyle, I Love Lucy, Beverly Hillbillies, Avengers, etc.

② BONANZA—Western

The Cartwrights are visited by Lord Dundord and his wife, who thinks her husband is a coward. Ben: Lorne Greene; Lady Beatrix: Hazel Court; Lord Dundord: Edward Ashley. (60 min.)

② WACKIEST SHIP IN THE ARMY

—Adventure

The Kwan crew tries to ransom two servicemen from a tribe of head-hunters. Butcher: Jack Warden; Dr. Newton: Hazel Court; Rapple: Gary Collins; Gunnerson: Harry Morgan; Peterson: Peter Brooks. (60 min.)

② ③ ④ BILL COSBY

Jackie "Moms" Mabley and Mantan Moreland are featured as Chet's squabbling aunt and uncle. Theirassy exchanges have been going on for 30 years, and Chet thinks it's time they cooled it. Script by Ed Weinberger; Chet: Bill Cosby, Guest Cast: Aunt Edna ... Jackie "Moms" Mabley Uncle Dewey ... Mantan Moreland Julie ... Jean LeGueerra Roy Woodward ... Johnnie Collins III Manager Alfred Donnla Phys. Ed. Instructor .. Arthur Adams

③ ④ ⑤ ANDY GRIFFITH

Epis. Opie and his pal Amos encounter trouble when they try to find a home for an abandoned baby. Opie: Ronny Howard; Aunt Bee: Frances Bavier; Gopher: George Lindsey.

Guest Cast

Arend Sheldon Cohn
Garland Jack Narzesse

⑦ IT TAKES A THIEF (C)

Mundy gets perilously popular with a gathering of vipers who mistake him for a free-lance agent peddling plutonium to the highest bidder. Perl notwithstanding, Mundy exploits the confusion to go after the stuff for the CIA. Cameo appearance by Peter Sellers. Filmed in Italy. Mundy: Robert Wagner; Willie Powers: Edward Binns; Jeanette: Paola Pitagora. (60 min.)

The shows shown in the column on the left are those which are presently of particular interest to me. Each of these titles is in syndication somewhere, but not currently available on any of my channels. If one of you would be good enough to watch out for them I would sincerely appreciate it. The clippings shown here from TV Guide are the most extensive I could find. When these shows are rerun, the listing is seldom this complete. For example, the Andy Griffith Show described here might be described simply as: Opie must find a home for an abandoned baby. (With no credits or any indication that Jack Nicholson appears in the episode)

Incidentally, if there are certain persons whose TV credits you are interested in, I may be able to help you out: Many people do not know that big stars like Nicholson, Robert Redford, Dustin Hoffman, Katherine Ross, etc. appeared on TV and that a certain number of those shows are still floating around in circulation, re-running on local stations.

In addition to the specific episodes shown here I would be interested in many others that I either have no description for (original dates only, but I'm working on it) or that I would be interested in virtually any episode of. Some of these are:

Best of Groucho (any of the better shows)
Jack Benny (any with Mel Blanc or Rochester)

Mission Impossible -- The episode with guests: Fritz Weaver and Hazel Court in which they are bilking wealthy people out of donations to build a hospital for crippled children.

Honeymooners -- The episode where Ralph and Ed fight over a TV set that was won with a movie ticket purchased by Ralph.

Honeymooners -- The episode where Ralph is Practicing to go on a quiz show and win a lot of money by naming song titles.

ADDENDUM

Before I could get this in the mail to you, a couple of other thoughts came up:

I am a big Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman fan. As such I have many of the first season episodes on hand. Most of these are in the edited down summer rerun version. There is one I missed that I would very much like to get ahold of. The description is as follows:

The episode where Mary finally shows up at Sgt. Foley's apartment on the big "Thursday Night". I have seen the following one where she has his bathrobe on in the first scene.

I've has a problem which may be peculiar to my unit that you can confirm from your experience. It seems that Black and White shows do not completely erase the image of a color show that was previously on the tape. At least that is what I have surmised is happening. Has this been your experience too? Any suggestions? Even if you use virgin tape for your Black and White shows they will probably have color commercials in them that will cause the same problem on any rerecording. On playback you can tune out the color, of course, but the image is still not the best, as the color appears as a sort of snow.

I know that many of you are looking to the Betamax as a way to build a collection of Movies. It has been my experience so far that it is a hassle to edit out the commercials unless you are a really determined viewer. I fully expect that when the MCA-Phillips Video Disk comes on the market the desire for most movies will be satisfied in that format and that TV tape will be useful primarily for preserving TV shows themselves as well as obscure films like "She Demons" that no respectable video disk maker is ever likely to produce.

I hope in the future to be letting you know about new products from Sony and others (I know they are working on a 90 minute tape) and hope that you will pass along to me any inside information that you may have.

Do any of you have any experience with cassettes other than Sony's own brand. I have been warned away from low quality tapes, but would certainly be interested in anything else that may be available.

***** The channels I get all come in via cablevision *****
and as a result are nearly perfect at all times.
Correction: Cable is never as good as a really
good antenna that is on a big tower, and has an
amplifier and rotor. I hope to add one of those.
But generally cable is far better than ordinary
antenna reception. I think it would be helpful
if we mention the type and quality of our recep-
tion when discussing trades and what not.

I have heard from enough of you (so far) who own 3/4" equipment to respond with an extra page.

Perhaps I should say here that I am not a TV technician, and probably know less about the ins and outs of electronic circuitry than many of you. But through my other contacts and inquiries around town I have surmised that it is a relatively simple matter to make copies between a 3/4" machine and the Betamax. Of course, it requires finding another collector, someone at a TV shop or TV station, or even perhaps a school or library who will work with you. I expect to develop some capability in this regard myself, and hope to have details by the third issue of this newsletter. Perhaps then we can all plug into the trading network that I hope to bring together. In the meantime I am listing your names and addresses so that you may contact each other:

Dale Johnson 500 Stella Drive Madison, Alabama 35758 : Has a Panasonic U-Matic Cassette Recorder and is looking for Superman.

James L. Lucas 3410 N.Lake Shore Drive Apt. 12-E Chicago, Illinois 60657: Has a JVC color cassette recorder.

Jim Gibbon Box 151 - 501 Holly St. Ellisville, Mississippi 39437: Has a Sony 3/4" cassette recorder, some 60 tapes, mostly TV shows.

Joe Mazzini Box 179 Arbuckle, California 95912: Has a Sony U-Matic(VO-1800) and is interested in contacting others.

George Theofiles (MISCELLANEOUS MAN) New Freedom, Penn. 17349: Has a Sony VO-1600, and has a number of things that he is willing to trade.

I feel compelled to say that the Betamax looks to be the wave of the future, at least for the hobbyist. The unit is being widely advertised and sold. It is only a matter of time before prerecorded material, other features,etc. will be available. Stay tuned.

If you would like a copy of my next newsletter (out early in Oct.) send me a large stamped envelope. It should contain much of interest. Indeed, I may have to charge \$ for the thing after that.